

# **GENDER-BIASNESS OF CHALLENGES DESIGNED AND TELEVISION PORTRAYAL OF GENDER IN EXPLORACE 2: A FEMINIST APPROACH TO STEREOTYPES AND PATRIARCHAL IDEOLOGY**

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## **Abstract**

Television is by far the most comprehensive medium of communication and socialization compared to the other media. The way television constructs and represents the ideas of masculinity and femininity is still very much in debates especially among feminist scholars. This is mainly because these ideas do not project the real world, but rather represents what we called a 'constructed reality' determined by the ideological discourses of power relations that control the production process. Images of women on television are still very much bounded within conservative and stereotyped representations. In order to look at why and how these ideas are being reinforced, it is crucial for us to understand the complex interaction between the media and the ideology, economic and political power of the dominant class and gender in our society. This paper attempts to look at how feminists approach the issue of gender-inequality and stereotype representations of women on television by using the dual-systems theory of feminism. The focus of study will be on Explorace 2, a television reality program produced by TV3. A thorough analysis of two episodes from this program is carried out to see the gender-biased ness and stereotypical portrayal of women on television.

## **Abstrak**

Secara umumnya, televisyen merupakan medium komunikasi dan sosialisasi yang lebih komprehensif berbanding bentuk media yang lain. Cara televisyen membina dan memaparkan idea-idea berkenaan maskulin dan feminin masih terus dibahaskan, terutamanya di kalangan sarjana-sarjana feminis. Ini adalah disebabkan idea-idea tersebut tidak memaparkan realiti, tetapi mewakili apa yang disebut sebagai 'realiti yang dibina', yang ditentukan oleh ideologi kuasa-kuasa yang mengawal proses produksi. Imej wanita dalam televisyen masih terkongkong dalam lingkungan konservatif dan perwakilan yang stereotaip. Untuk melihat mengapa dan bagaimana idea-idea ini diperkukuhkan, adalah penting bagi kita memahami interaksi kompleks antara media, ideologi, kuasa politik dan ekonomi kelompok dominan dalam masyarakat. Kertas kerja ini bertujuan untuk melihat bagaimana feminis mendekati isu

ketidaksamarataan gender dan pemaparan stereotaip wanita dalam televisyen dengan mengaplikasikan teori feminis dua-sistem. Fokus kajian adalah Explorace 2, sebuah program realiti televisyen terbitan TV3. Analisis menyeluruh terhadap dua episod daripada rancangan itu dilakukan untuk melihat isu ketidaksamarataan gender dan pemaparan stereotaip wanita di kaca televisyen.

Keywords: Gender-biased, feminism, portrayal, reality program, representation

### Introduction

From newspaper to MTV, media interact with cultural images of gender and with individual identities in three ways. First, media reflect cultural values and ideals about gender. They portray women, men and relationship between the sexes in ways that mirror widely shared understandings and ideals. Second, media reproduce cultural views of gender in individuals. By defining "normal" women, men and relationships, media suggest how we should be as women and men. Third, media are gatekeepers of information and images (Wood, 1994: 231).

Unlike the other media, television is by far the most comprehensive medium of communication and socialization. The ways television constructs and represents the ideas of masculinity and femininity are still very much in debates. This is mainly because these ideas do not reflect the real world. Whatever is presented by television is rather a "constructed reality" determined by the ideological discourses of power relations that control the mode of production. According to Wood, (1994: 233-234), all forms of media communicate images of the sexes, many of which perpetuate unrealistic, stereotypical and limiting perceptions. Because television exerts such a powerful influence on how we view and understand our culture, fact and fiction become entangled. When women and men are shown in stereotyped roles, whether in a "factual" documentary or a fictional situation comedy, these images come together as being correct, appropriate and realistic (Lindsey, 1990: 242).

It is with this mind that this paper will attempt to provide first the theoretical basis for analyzing how television portrays gender and its relations to a larger social system. Then, the second section is to examine Explorace 2 as a case study. The reasons why I choose to study this particular television program are:

- 1) Explorace 2 is put under the genre of *reality program*
- 2) Television texts have their own codes and conventions that represent certain meanings in society.



The discussion of these two points will be elaborated in the later part of this paper.

### Theoretical Framework

In order to look at how television represents gender inequality and stereotypes, and their link to the patriarchal system, a larger perspective of how feminists theorized the patriarchal ideologies within the social context need to be learnt. The meaning of the term (*patriarchy*) has evolved since Weber, especially in the writings by radical feminists, who developed the element of the domination of women by men and who paid less attention to the issue of how men dominated each other, and by dual-systems theories, who have sought to develop a concept and theory of patriarchy as a system which exists alongside capitalism (and sometimes racism too) (Walby, 1990: 19).

As suggested by the above points, I would like to stress at how radical feminism, Marxist feminism and the dual-systems theory approach the 'patriarchy' term. In addition to what Walby said about radical feminism, Lindsey, Linda L. (1990: 12) pointed out that women's oppression stems from male domination; so if men are the problem, institutional change of the socialist variety will not overcome it. Therefore, women must create their own separate institutions and sever their relationship with men. But the idea of a women-identified world where women rely on women alone is very much addressed differently among radical writers themselves.

Marxist feminist analysis differs from that of radical feminism especially in considering gender inequality to derive from capitalism, and not to be constituted as an independent system of patriarchy. Men's domination over women is a by-product of capital's domination over labour. Class relations and the economic exploitation of one class by another are the central features of social structure, and these determine the nature of gender relations, the family is considered to benefit capital by providing a cheap way of providing the day-to-day care of workers, such as food and clean clothes, and for producing the next generation of workers. It is cheap because women as housewives do this for no wage, merely receiving maintenance from their husbands. Thus capital benefits from the unequal sexual division of labour within the home (Walby, S. 1990: 3-4). The main problem about Marxist feminism is that it is too focused on capitalism, rather than dealing with gender inequality in terms of ideology and culture.

This is where the dual-systems theory comes in perspective, where the radical feminist theory is synthesized with Marxist. Walby (1990: 5) continued saying that rather than being an exclusive focus on either capitalism or patriarchy, this perspective argues that

both systems are present and important in the structuring of contemporary gender relations. Contemporary gender inequality is analyzed as a result of the structures of a capitalist and patriarchal or capital-patriarchal society. Patriarchy provides a system of control and law and order, while capitalism provides a system of economy, in the pursuit of profit.

Although the existing forms of dual-systems theory is said to establish at different levels of society due to the idea of capitalism, a more focus on the patriarchy side should be given at a broader range. This is because, the concept (*patriarchy*) is now more widely and generally used to refer to the total social organization of gender relations, institutions and social processes which produce and reproduce women as socially, politically and sexually subordinate to men (O'Sullivan, et al, 1994: 291). Capitalism comes in line with this concept where television is seen as part of the capitalist industry, controlled by the ideological discourses of the dominant class and gender (men) in the pursuit of profit.

In order to attract as large an audience as possible, the cultural producers for the market has to follow familiar convention, formulae, codes and rules (Wang Lay Kim, 2002: 6). Media producers, especially advertisers, argue that categorical images are what the public wants to see and that even if somewhat inaccurate, these portrayals generally reflect society. If a sexist society exists, the media reinforce it. From their viewpoint, to do otherwise would risk public acceptance and monetary returns (Lindsey, 1990: 250).

Thus, we have seen that television does not only represent the social and cultural conditions in a very constructive way where the so-called 'reality' is accepted as common-sense and normal, but also reinforce the building of a general social structure and individuals identities based on inequality, discrimination and stereotype portrayals. We might want to argue that we know the difference between fantasy and reality, and that the representations do not really concern us, but according to Wood (1994: 249), research, however suggests that the unrealistic ideals in popular media do influence how we feel about ourselves and our relationships. Mediated images seem to function at a less than conscious level as implicit models for our own lives.

Feminism takes the view that media are run by men in the interests of men and produce texts that reinforce those interests. Feminists are especially concerned about representations of women as offering negative and repressive ideas about what it is, and should be, to be a woman in the society. They would describe the media and society as being patriarchal – dominated by the idea of the power of the male father figure (Grosz, 1990: 149-150). The portrayal of women on television nowadays is still very much the same like what we had back in the 80s. Traditional roles like being a housewife



or women as sex-objects are still the central images in any television program. These kinds of representations are not only sexist and insulting, but also undervalue women's abilities.

The constant portrayal of stereotyped images and characteristics of women on television, as suggested by O' Sullivan, et al (1994: 300), will encourage an *intuitive belief* in their own underlying assumptions, and play a central role in organizing *common sense discourse*. This means that the categorization and labeling of something through the course of stereotype might be accepted as believable, common and true by the society, while it is actually not. The very qualities women are encouraged to develop (beauty, sexiness, passivity, powerlessness) in order to meet cultural ideals of femininity contribute to their victimization, while the qualities that men are urged to exemplify (aggressiveness, dominance, sexuality, strength) are identical to those linked to the abuse of women (Wood, 1994: 243-244).

The theoretical framework of how feminists view gender inequality and power relations is applicable to the social and cultural context of Malaysian society because of the ways our media operates, produces, distributes and delivers its products. They are very much the same in any other social context. Most of the women's images on television are still bounded within the conservative and stereotyped representations, either straightforward or embedded within the television codes and conventions. So, it is important for us to look beyond what is presented in order to understand the complex interaction between the ideology, economic and political power of the dominant class and gender in our society.

### **An Overview of Reality Programs**

In the early part of this paper, I have pointed out two objectives of analyzing Explorace 2 from the feminist point of view. First, the program is put under the reality show genre and second, I want to look at the reinforcement of gender inequality, sex-role stereotype and how patriarchal ideology operates within the codes and conventions of that program.

Lately, television reality programs have become a new and popular phenomenon among the Malaysian audience. Apart from the imported ones, there has also been a rapid growth in locally-produced reality programs. Television stations and production houses are competing with each other to come out with the most audience-appealing programs. Back to the earlier argument about television being part of the capitalist industry, in order to gain profit, media producers give the public what they claimed is a 'general acceptance' of television image portrayals. To do otherwise will only risk in their financial returns. This is because profits no longer come from advertisers alone, but from the television audience as well, in

the form of 'short-message-service' (SMS) via the telephone. This format allows the audience to directly participate in some of the programs. This is where the term interactive TV derived from, but it is not the purpose of this section to discuss this term at length. Kilborn (1994: 243-246) stated that whatever the format of the individual reality program, the primary aim of the program maker(s) is to highlight the quality of shared experience or lived reality. A vital requirement, however, is that whatever the subject matter, the television audience should always be easily able to relate to what is being screened.

Reality programs in Malaysia started out in early 90s, where most of the programs are either singing or talent-show competitions. For examples, *Bintang RTM*, *Asia Bagus*, *Sinaran Pasport Kegemilangan* and the *Golden Teen Search* (just to name a few). Participants are mostly amateur singers and performers, and they come from as far as Singapore, Indonesia and Japan, as in the case of *Asia Bagus*. I still remember the time when TV3 introduced a new segment in their morning talk show, *Sekapur Sirih*. The segment, *Jejak Kasih*, focused on people who are searching for their missing families to broadcast appeals for the lost to get in touch. The emotional and dramatized reunions between these two parties are then staged live in front of the television audience. Back then, direct involvement from the audience did not occur at a bigger scale, due to the lack of advancement and usage of communication technologies among them. With more imported reality programs enter our television sets each day, the need to produce local products has also increased. Most of the local products are seen to apply the same formulae or formats from the imported ones. Some of the examples of recent and popular locally-produced reality programs are *Akademi Fantasia* (ASTRO), *Jom Tukar* (RTM), *Nescafe-Kick-Start* (8TV), *Audition* (ntv7), *Malaysian Idol*, *Bersamamu*, *Mencari Cinta*, *Mentor*, *Malaysian Top Host*, *Jom Masak Bersama Minyak Seri Murni*, and of course, *Explorace* (all are under TV3).

*Explorace* (now entering its third seasons), is a challenging reality program that offers contestants a total grand prize of RM100,000 cash. With its popular tagline "Explorace: The Extreme Journey – Malaysia's most challenging reality show!", this program is instantly compared to CBS's *The Amazing Race* when it first started out. Although the format of both programs is more or less the same, where contestants have to race to a certain location while fulfilling several tasks along the way, *Explorace* is somehow different in the way challenges are designed to the contestants and how men and women are portrayed in the program.

My analysis for this paper will be based on 2 episodes from the second season of the program. *Explorace 2* is broadcasted every Thursday night (9.30 p.m.-10.30 p.m.) on TV3 channel during that season. According to *Nielsen Media Research* (dated 23-29 January



2005), this program is listed at no.8 in the Top 10 Programs Across All Channels chart in the country, with viewer ship of 2,455,000 people (potential audience total 6+: 16,799,000). The format of the race is simple – 12 teams of two have been selected and each team will be given a clue and several tasks to complete in order for one member to retrieve the Explorace Golden Key and the other to locate the Explorace Golden Box.

The first team to complete the task and reach the end location will be declared the winner for that round. There are three rounds altogether. The first round sees 12 teams competing in 6 different locations around Malaysia, where in each episode, 2 teams will compete against each other to win that round. With 6 teams eliminated, the remaining 6 teams that win their rounds will compete in the semi finals in 3 different countries. The final round has three teams competing for the grand prize. The race will start at an overseas destination and end in Malaysia.

My main concern about this program is that it is put under the genre of reality program, as suggested by its tagline. The term 'reality' is often a misleading one. By placing television programs under certain categories (or genre), they are assumed to possess certain characteristics that represent the categories. In my earlier discussion, I have pointed out that the 'reality' presented by television, in this case, the reality programs, does not project the real world, but rather a 'constructed' one. It is therefore, according to Feuer (1992: 144) that 'the ideological approach views genre as an instrument of control'; that is genre is seen to reproduce the ideologies of capitalism, nationalism, individualism, sexism, racism and class structure. Genres limit and constrain the possibilities of meaning within what are acceptable within ideologies. Altman (1987: 5) argues that genres are not neutral; instead, he sees them as 'ideological constructs masquerading as neutral categories'.

In my analysis of Explorace, I find that the challenges or tasks designed for the contestants are gender-biased and the television portrayals of gender are still bounded within conventional sex-role stereotypes. So, by putting Explorace under reality program genre, these representations might be wrongly interpreted as 'reality' by the television audience. Hence, a better understanding of how the television codes and conventions function within the larger social, cultural and political framework is important because this kind of program is definitely not an 'innocent' one.

#### *The Analysis*

As mentioned earlier, the race is divided into 3 rounds: first, semi-final and final. My analysis will focus only on the selection of teams in the first round of the race. Then, two episodes from this round will be studied in order to see the gender-biased ness of the challenges

designed for the competing teams and how television portrays gender in stereotypical ways. The first round of the race is between 12 teams where 2 teams will compete against each other in every episode. The semi-final and final round of the race will not be part of this analysis.

From my findings, the 12 teams that have qualified to the first round are divided into 3 categories – men, women and couple. But in all episodes (of the first round), when 2 teams are competing against each other, the race is either between men versus men, women versus women or couple versus couple. There is no cross-gender competition or 'battle of the sexes' involved in this round. Even when couple teams are competing, the race is still of the same sex (Route 1: man versus man, Route 2: woman versus woman). I do not know how the race gets to be designed in this way, but my assumption is that it has already been determined by the production team (TV3). Although contestants might be asked to draw lots in order to decide who will go against whom, a perfect match like this is quite impossible to achieve.

The table below shows the teams that are competing in each episode. The first episode is only an introduction to the new season of Explorace, therefore it is not included in this table.

Episode	Category	Team / Contestants	Location
2	Men <i>vs</i> Men	Amir / Dani <i>vs</i> Jes / Chum	Sabah
3	Women <i>vs</i> Women	Kim / Lynn <i>vs</i> Haslina / Vanessa	Pahang
4	Couple <i>vs</i> Couple	Nurul / Fido <i>vs</i> Faezah / Malek	Terengganu
5	Men <i>vs</i> Men	Hasnydzam / Mohd Shahriza <i>vs</i> Phillip/ Goldwin	Perlis
6	Women <i>vs</i> Women	Siti / Viji <i>vs</i> Azura / Azira	Sarawak
7	Couple <i>vs</i> Couple	Yohanis / Joyce <i>vs</i> Hanif / Narin	N. Sembilan

Based on the division of teams, it is obvious that this program is already gender-biased. It suggests that women are not competent enough to race against men. They are still stereotyped as the weaker species and pessimistic. This boundary is surely hard to overcome if the dominant gender who controls the mode of production desires this kind of representations in the media. Thus, by reinforcing certain values and characteristics, the ideology of patriarchy continues to function inside the society.

In order to study gender-biased ness of the challenges designed in the race for men and women, and stereotypical portrayal of



gender on television, episode 2 (men versus men: Amir/Dani against Jes/Chum) and episode 3 (women versus women: Kim/Lynn against Haslina/Vanessa) will be used as the basis of analysis.

According to Wood (1994: 235), in general, media continue to present both women and men in stereotyped ways that limit our perceptions of human possibilities. Typically, men are portrayed as active, adventurous, powerful, sexually aggressive and largely uninvolved in human relationship. Just as consistent with cultural views of gender are depictions of women as sex objects who are usually young, thin, beautiful, passive, dependent, and often incompetent and dumb. Following these points, gender stereotypes will be discussed in my analysis under 3 main themes.

### **Men: serious and tough / Women: emotional**

At the starting point of the race, Jes and Chum performed the Haka Dance (New Zealand's Maori War Dance) in front of the other competing team. This act indicates extreme masculinity where men are seen as tough, strong, aggressive, violent, hard and powerful. The host of the program then said to the other team:

*"Wow, that's scary. How can you be so relaxed? Ok, they are just taking it cool."*

The use of word like 'scary' reinforced the above idea of masculinity. Amir and Dani, who are clad in red T-shirts, seem undisturbed by the Haka Dance. Their coolness can be associated with being serious as well, even under a threatening position.

Dani and Chum, taking on the Route 2 challenge, are given a task where they have to pluck 5 kilos of 'snake skins' fruits. This activity is quite dangerous because the trees are full of thorns. But they are shown as not having troubles at all while performing the task. Adding to the earlier stereotypes, men are portrayed as being more adventurous and unafraid compared to women. The same thing applies to Jes and Amir, who are on Route 1 challenge. In Gomantong Cave, they have to climb on the ladder that is used to collect bird nests in order to retrieve the Golden Key. Here, the host once again stressed the word 'scary':

*"Tourists can come to observe how the locals take the bird nests...trust me, it's a scary, scary experience."*

Women, on the other hand, are shown as being emotional and weak. At the starting point of the race, Kim and Lynn named their group - Girl Power, while Haslina and Vanessa called theirs - Mother Power. Based on the names alone, we can already see the tagging of

feminine identity of the contestants. At the Tekam Plantation Resort, while performing her task of collecting fruits (bananas, jackfruits and coconuts), Haslina is caught saying this:

*"'You can do it'. That's what I want to hear from my child(ren)...I know I can do this."*

Talking about her loved ones can be depicted as an emotional act and judging from the above dialogue, we could assume that the loved ones are the source of strength for women. It also means that they are 'dependent' people. Meanwhile, Vanessa, who is at Temerloh town following Route 2, is penalized to catch fish from a fishing pond. She is shown apologizing to the fish because she felt sorry for them. Again, this act is chosen to be presented on television probably because of its emotional dramatic and appeal ness to the audience.

#### **Men: sexually aggressive / Women: vulnerable sex objects**

On the way to Kampung Garinono, Chum is shown flirting with a woman on the bus in order to get her to tell him the exact location of Kampung Garinono. Probably drawn to his charm, the woman is willing to help him even though she also does not know the way to the village. Men sometimes do use their sexual appeals to fulfill their need, in this case, the information of a particular location. Most of the time as well, the camera pays close attention to Chum's and Jes's well-built bodies. This indicates that, men, although being depicted as sex-objects, they are of positive traits.

At the meeting point of the race, which is the Sandakan Tourist Information Centre, both teams are given a task of dressing up mannequins with Suluk Daling-Daling traditional costume. Puzzled by the difficult outfits, the host then said to the teams:

*"Now dressing up him shouldn't be a problem to the guys...but dressing up her...hmm...that might be a little bit trickier."*

From this dialogue, we could already sense gender discrimination where women are seen as more problematic than men. By saying 'tricky', two possibilities might explained what the host meant by the word. First, more attention should be given to the details of the costume while dressing up the mannequin or second, a sexual connotation that implies the act of men dressing up a 'woman', although she is just a lifeless object. The mannequins, sprawled 'naked' on the table, are then aggressively handled by the contestants, while the camera is closing up to Dani and Amir buttoning the costume near the chest area of the mannequin. This act



does not only indicate sexual aggressiveness of men, but also women as sex object, where certain parts of the female body come to the focus.

The image of women as object of male desires is presented at the very beginning of the women's race. Contestants from both teams wear tight black T-shirts and knee-length pants, revealing parts of their bodies. While their male encounters from the previous episode had to deal with tough challenges involving physical and mental capabilities, Kim and Haslina on the other hand, have to beckon the deer at the Deerland by using a 'Tarzan-like' shout under the supervision of a man. Obviously this task does not require any physical strength at all. The shout can also connote various meanings to different people. It could depict anger, anxious, agony or contentment.

These two contestants then proceed to the next location where once again they are given 'unnecessary' and 'unchallenging' task, that is bathing with the elephants at a nearby river. This activity only enhances their sex-appeal ness especially when their wet clothes are clinging tightly to their bodies. The same thing happens to Vanessa and Lynn who are required to catch the fish in the pond.

The portrayal of women as sex-objects continues to fill our television sets right from the starting point of the race until the end. At an Orang asli settlement, the women contestants have to adorn themselves with some of the aborigine ornaments and light a fire using the traditional way of the Orang Asli. This task only reinforced the idea that women like to be beautiful and attractive, while fire signifies passion, sexuality, desire and affection.

Men: mentally-strong / Women: problematic

In this program, men are put under challenging tasks that not only their physical strength is needed, but mentally as well. Amir and Jess, after finding all the missing "turtle eggs" at three different locations, they have to solve a puzzle by using the alphabets that are written on the eggs. This puzzle will tell them the destination where they will meet up with their partners. In their final task, the men's sense of direction is tested when they are required to get the Explorace passport stamped at four different locations in the Sandakan city.

Women, on the other hand, are portrayed as problematic and disorganized. While proceeding to Gunung Senyum, Lynn suddenly called Kim to inform her partner that she is having her 'period' (menstruation). Kim's shocking face is shown on television as if they are in big trouble. I remember seeing the promo of this episode being broadcasted repeatedly, with Lynn talking to Kim on the phone saying:

*"...the thing is...my good friend just came...my good friend...my good friend...the red alien..."*

This small incident has been made 'big' by the television probably to promote this particular episode of the program. To some people, it might seem delightful and enjoyable to watch Lynn struggled to deal with this unexpected thing, but at a larger understanding, the portrayal of women as being problematic and messy is still a very strong stereotype. In this case, Lynn's unexpected problem might disrupt her chances of winning the race. Therefore, the indication that can be made from this is achieving dreams and goals are troublesome for women because they have to overcome certain obstacles that derived from themselves in order to get what they want.

Based on the analysis of these 2 episodes from *Explorace 2*, the contradiction of the three themes shows that men and women being portrayed differently by the television. They are still restricted within stereotypical images that result in sexism, a belief that signifies female as being inferior to male. This does not reflect on the reality of our world, but if these images are constantly being reinforced, the society might believe that certain characteristics do belong to a certain gender. Thus, as I stress out earlier in my discussion, a program like *Explorace* should not be seen as an 'innocent' program, but rather a mean of control used by those who produce the product and of where the patriarchal ideology derived from. So, it is very misleading to categorize *Explorace* under a television reality program genre especially when the women contestants said:

*"All you female in Malaysia, we represent you!"*

Surely this representation is not a genuine one, but rather a 'constructed reality' of our world.

### Conclusion

As a conclusion, I refer to what Fiske (1991: 233) has quoted Hall (1981):

*"The cultural industries do have the power constantly to rework and reshape what they represent and by repetition and selection, to impose and implant such definitions of ourselves as fit more easily into the descriptions of the dominant or preferred culture. That is what the concentration of cultural power – the means of culture-making in the*



hands of the few – actually means. These definitions don't have the power to occupy our minds; they don't function on us as if we are blank screens. But they do occupy and rework the inferior contradictions of feeling and perception in the dominated classes."

Gender-biased ness and the stereotypical portrayal of women on the television program we have discussed show there is a larger system that controls these mode of representations, as suggested by Hall. This control is exercise to reinforce the patriarchal ideology of putting women under the domination and oppression of men. An understanding of how this patriarchal ideology works inside and outside our society is essential, so that women will have a room to implement their rights and needs in the society.

As suggested by Walby (1990: 200), gender relations are not static, and a developed concept of patriarchy is the best way of theorizing the changes. The idea of patriarchy does not necessarily give rise to fixed, a historic analysis. Women are not passive victims of oppressive structures. They have struggled to change both their immediate circumstances and the wider social structures.

It is my hope that this paper will be able to contribute in the reshaping of a better future for women worldwide.

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